

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

09-17-0002

IHS Scholarship and Loan Repayment Programs

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System name: Indian Health Service Scholarship and Loan Repayment Programs, HHS/IHS/OHP.

Security classification: None.

System location:

Scholarship and Loan Repayment Branch

Indian Health Service
12300 Twinbrook Parkway, Suite 100
Rockville, Maryland 20852

Washington National Records Center

4205 Suitland Road
Suitland, Maryland 20409

Records are also located at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Regional Offices and Indian Health Service (IHS) Area Offices. A list of the HHS Regional Offices and IHS Area Offices where individually identifiable data are currently located is available upon request to the Policy-Coordinating Official(s).

Categories of individuals covered by the system: Applicants for and recipients of benefits from scholarship and loan repayment programs administered by the IHS. The IHS scholarship program includes the Health Professions Pre-Graduate Scholarship Program for Indians, the Health Professions Preparatory Scholarship Program for Indians, and the Health Professions Scholarship Program. Also included are records of scholarship or loan repayment recipients who are fulfilling their IHS service obligations as a result of receiving funds from these IHS programs, and individuals who have expressed an interest in employment in or an assignment to an IHS medical facility or other facility described in sections 104 and 108 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, as amended.

Categories of records in the system: Contains: Name, telephone number, work, school, home and/or mailing address; Social Security Number; IHS scholarship or IHS loan repayment application; associated forms; employment data; professional performance and credentialing history of licensed health professionals; preference for site selection; personal, professional, and demographic background information; progress reports (which include related data, correspondence, and professional performance information consisting of continuing education, performance awards, and adverse or disciplinary actions); payroll forms; lender's loan repayment confirmation forms; IHS loan recipient's request form for quarterly loan repayment distribution among lenders; deferment and placement date; and repayment/delinquent/default status information.

Authority for maintenance of the system:

25 U.S.C. 1613, including the Health Professions Compensatory Pre-professional and the Health Professions Pre-graduate Scholarships; 25 U.S.C. 1613a, Health Professions Scholarship; 25 U.S.C. 1616a, IHS Loan Repayment Program, 5 U.S.C. 5514, Requirement That Applicant Furnish Taxpayer Identifying Number; 42 U.S.C. 216(a), for PHS Commissioned Officers, and 5 U.S.C. 3301 for civil service employee, both of which authorize verification of an individual's suitability for employment; and 42 U.S.C. 254f, Assignment of Corps Personnel.

Purpose(s): The purposes of this system of records are:

- (1) To select applicants for the IHS Scholarship Programs and the IHS Loan Repayment Program;
- (2) to monitor scholarship or loan repayment related activities, such as payment tracking, deferment of services obligation, default, placement, and claims determinations;
- (3) to select and match IHS scholarship and loan repayment recipients for employment assignments to medical programs, such as IHS medical facilities;
- (4) to monitor services provided by these IHS health providers;
- (5) to maintain records on and to verify individuals' educational/professional employment data and performance history;
- (6) to assist PHS officials in the collection of overdue debts owed under the IHS Scholarship Program; and
- (7) to negotiate site assignments, and recruit health professionals for IHS programs. Portions of records from this system of records may be used by staff of the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), PHS, who maintain System No. 09-15-0045, A Health Resources and Services Administration Loan Repayment/Debt Management Records System, HHS/HRSA/OA,@ for activities related to the participants' breach of contract including debt collection information provided to HRSA staff includes, but may not be limited to the participants' identification, number of days in school while covered by an IHS scholarship agreement, number of days served and still owed, and amount of funds expended and still owed.

Routine uses of records maintained in the system, including categories of users and the purposes of such uses:

1. The IHS may disclose records to a congressional office in response to a verified inquiry from the congressional office made at the written request of the subject individual.
2. Records may be disclosed to authorized persons employed by the grantee institution (the educational institution which the recipient of a scholarship grant is attending or the hospital affiliated with an educational institution the IHS loan repayment recipient is attending to complete his/her residency requirement) as needed for the administration of a scholarship grant award.
3. Records may be disclosed to other Federal agencies that also provide scholarship funding at

the request of these Federal agencies to detect or curtail fraud and abuse in Federal scholarship programs, and to collect delinquent loans or benefit payments owed to the Federal Government.

4. The IHS will provide to any person or organization requesting it a list of recipients of scholarship grants, including the school attended and tribal affiliation of each recipient.

5. The Department may disclose information from this system of records to the Department of Justice, or to a court or other tribunal, when

- (a) HHS, or any component thereof; or
- (b) Any HHS employee in his or her official capacity; or
- (c) Any HHS employee in his or her individual capacity where the Department of Justice (or HHS, where it is authorized to do so) has agreed to represent the employee; or
- (d) The United States or any agency thereof where HHS determines that the litigation is likely to affect HHS or any of its components, is a party to litigation or has an interest in such litigation, and HHS determines that the use of such records by the Department of Justice, the court or other tribunal is relevant and necessary to the litigation and would help in the effective representation of the governmental party, provided, however, that in each case, HHS determines that such disclosure is compatible with the purpose for which the records were collected.

6. In the event that a system of records maintained by this agency to carry out its functions indicates a violation of potential violation of law, whether civil, criminal, or regulatory in nature, and whether arising by general statute or particular program statute, or by regulation, rule or order issued pursuant thereto, the relevant records in the system of records may be referred to the appropriate agency, whether Federal, State, or local, charged with enforcing or implementing the statute or rule, regulation or order issued pursuant thereto.

7. The IHS may disclose records consisting of names, disciplines, current mailing addresses, and dates of graduation of scholarship recipients to designated coordinators at each school of medicine, osteopathy, and dentistry participating in the IHS loan recipient is completing his/her residency requirement for the purpose of guiding and informing these recipients about the nature of their forthcoming professional service obligation.

8. The IHS may disclose records consisting of names of the IHS scholarship or IHS loan repayment recipient, professional school he/she is attending, and the date of graduation to health professions associations and other interested health professions groups which have responsibility for coordinating funds paid to students from Federal and other sources.

9. The IHS may disclose records contained in this system of records to HHS contractors and subcontractors for the purpose of collecting, compiling, aggregating, analyzing, or refining records in the system. Contractors maintain, and are also required to ensure that subcontractors maintain, Privacy Act safeguards with respect to such records.

10. The IHS may disclose records contained in this system of records to HHS contractors and subcontractors for the purpose of recruiting, screening, and matching health professionals for assignment to or employment in a medical facility located in one of the options cited in section 108(a)(2)(A). In addition, HHS contractors and subcontractors:

- (a) May disclose biographic data and information supplied by potential applicants;
 - (1) To references listed on application and associated forms for the purpose of evaluating the applicant's professional qualifications, experience, and suitability, and
 - (2) To a State or local government medical licensing board and/or to the Federation of State Medical Boards or a similar non-government entity for the purpose of verifying that all claimed background and employment data are valid

and all claimed credentials are current and in good standing.

- (b) May disclose biographic data and information supplied by references listed on application and associated forms to other references for the purpose of inquiring into the applicant's professional qualifications and suitability; and
- (c) May disclose professional suitability evaluation information to IHS officials, prospective employers, or to officials, prospective employers, or to site representatives, for the purpose of appraising the applicant's professional qualifications and suitability for site assignment or employment. Contractors maintain, and are also required to ensure that subcontractors maintain Privacy Act safeguards with respect to such records.

11. The IHS may disclose records contained in this system of records to private parties such as present and former employers references listed on application and associated forms, other references, and education institutions. The purpose of such disclosures is to obtain information to evaluate an individual's professional accomplishments, performance, and educational background, and to determine if an applicant is suitable for employment in/assignment to a medical facility located at one of the sites listed in section 108(a)(2)(A).

12. The IHS may disclose records contained in this system of records to other Federal agencies that also provide scholarship or educational loan repayment fundings at the request of these Federal agencies in conjunction with a computer matching program conducted by these Federal agencies to detect or curtail fraud and abuse in Federal scholarship or educational loan repayment programs, and to collect delinquent loans or benefit payments owed to the Federal Government.

Disclosure to consumer reporting agencies: Disclosures pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552a(b)(12): Disclosures may be made from this system to consumer reporting agencies as defined in the Fair Credit Reporting Act (15 U.S.C. 158a(f) or the Federal Claims Collection Act of 1966 (31 U.S.C. 3701(a)(3)). The purposes of these disclosures are:

- (1) To provide an incentive for debtors to repay delinquent Federal Government debts by making these debts part of their credit records, and
- (2) to enable PHS agencies to improve the quality of loan and scholarship decisions by taking into account the financial reliability of applicants. Disclosure of records will be limited to the individual's name, Social Security Number, and other information necessary to establish the identity of the individual, the amount, status, and history of the claim, and the agency or program under which the claim arose.

Policies and practices for storing, retrieving, accessing, retaining, and disposing of records in the system:

Storage: Records are maintained in folders, ledgers, magnetic tapes, and on electronic word processing diskettes.

Retrievability: Records which identify individual persons are indexed by name or identification number of scholarship or loan repayment applicant or recipient.

Safeguards:

1. **Authorized users:** Access is limited only to authorized personnel in the performance of their duties. Authorized personnel include: The system manager, his/her staff, IHS Area Office

Scholarship or IHS Loan Repayment Coordinators, IHS Headquarters Branch Chiefs acting as advisors to scholarship or IHS loan repayment recipients, staffs of the IHS Grants Management Offices in IHS Headquarters and IHS Area Offices and HRSA debt management staff for activities related to the participants' breach of contract including debt collection.

2. Physical safeguards: Paper records are stored in locked file cabinets. The records storage areas are secured during off-duty hours. Magnetic tapes, discs, and word processing diskettes are stored in areas where fire and life safety codes are strictly enforced. Word processing diskettes are off-loaded and stored in locked cabinets when not in use. All automated and non-automated documents are protected during lunch hours and nonworking hours in locked file cabinets or locked storage areas. The Automated Data Processing remote stations are locked during non-standard working hours. Twenty-four hour, 7-day security guards perform random checks on the physical security of the data and the storage areas. Backup files are maintained in an off-site facility with controlled entrances and exits.

3. Procedural safeguards: All IHS personnel who make use of records contained in this system are made aware of their responsibilities under the provisions of the Privacy Act and are required to maintain Privacy Act safeguards with respect to such records. The records storage areas are not left unattended during office hours, including lunch hours. Records are not removed from these areas in which they are maintained in the absence of proper charge-out procedures. Twenty-four hour, seven-day security guards perform random checks on the physical security of the records storage areas and word processing diskettes. A data set name controls the release of data to only authorized users. When copying records for authorized purposes, care is taken to ensure that any imperfect pages are not left in the reproduction room where they can be read, but are destroyed or obliterated.

Retention and disposal:

1. Scholarship applications are returned to unsuccessful applicants 6 months after the IHS scholarships are awarded for each fiscal year. The records for the scholarship participants who are obligated to the IHS, are retained for approximately 4 to 15 years (depending on when the student completes the obligatory service) after the final award payments has been made by the IHS. The records for the scholarship applicants, who are not obligated to the IHS, are destroyed 6 years and 3 months after final payment, or upon resolution of any adverse audit findings, whichever is later.

2. Loan repayment applications are returned to unsuccessful applicants after the end of the following fiscal year. Loan repayment applications are automatically applied to the loan repayment cycle of the following fiscal year if the application is turned down for the current fiscal year. The records for the loan repayment participants are destroyed 6 to 10 years after the final payment, or upon resolution of any adverse audit findings, whichever is later.

Records are transferred to the Federal Records Center 2 years after final repayment or when closed, for 4 years, and are then subsequently disposed of in accordance with the IHS Records Disposition Schedule. The IHS Records Disposition Schedule regulations for these records may be obtained by writing to the System Manager at the address listed below.

System manager(s) and address:

Policy Coordinating Official(s):

Director, Division of Health Professions Recruitment and Training, Indian Health Service,
Twinbrook Metro Plaza, 12300 Twinbrook Parkway, Suite 100, Rockville, Maryland 20852

Chief, Scholarship Branch, DHPRT, Indian Health Service, Twinbrook Metro Plaza, 12300
Twinbrook Parkway, Suite 100, Rockville, Maryland 20852

Loan Repayment Applicants/Recipients: Coordinator, Loan Repayment Program, Scholarship Branch, DHPRT, Indian Health Service, Twinbrook Metro Plaza, 12300 Twinbrook Parkway, Suite 100, Rockville, Maryland 20852.

Notification procedures:

Requests in person: A subject individual who appears in person at a specific location seeking access to or disclosure of records relating to him/her shall provide his/her name, current address, Grant Identification Number, Social Security Number or other identification numbers, dates of enrollment in the IHS scholarship or loan repayment program, and at least one piece of tangible identification such as driver's license, passport, or voter registration card. Identification papers with current photographs are preferred, but not required. If a subject individual has no identification, but is personally known to an agency employee, such employee shall make a written record verifying the subject individual's identity. Where the subject individual has no identification papers, the responsible agency official shall require that the subject individual certify in writing that he/she is the individual who he/she claims to be and that he/she understands that the knowing and willful request or acquisition of a record concerning an individual under false pretenses is a criminal offense subject to a 5,000 dollars fine.

Requests by mail: A written request must contain the name and address of the requestor, Social Security Number or signature which is either notarized to verify his/her identity or includes a written certification that the requestor is the person he/she claims to be and that he/she understands that the knowing and willful request or acquisition of records pertaining to an individual under false pretenses is a criminal offense subject to a 5,000 dollars fine. In addition, the following information is needed: Dates of enrollment in the IHS scholarship program or IHS loan repayment program, and current enrollment status, such as pending application approval, deferment or service obligation, or shortage area placement.

Requests by telephone: Since positive identification of the caller cannot be established, telephone requests are not honored; the caller is asked to submit his/her request in writing. In addition, the requestor is informed that provision of his/her Social Security Number may assist in the verification of the identity of the person as well as the identification of his/her record. The requestor is informed that provision of his/her Social Security Number is voluntary and that the individual will not be refused access to his/her record for failure to disclose his/her Social Security Number.

Record access procedures: Same as notification procedures. Requesters should also provide a reasonable description of the record being sought. Requesters may also request an accounting of disclosures that have been made of their record, if any.

Contesting record procedures: Contact the Policy Coordinating Official, provide a reasonable description of the record, specify the information being contested, the corrective action sought, and the reasons for requesting the correction, along with supporting information to show how the record is inaccurate, incomplete, untimely, or irrelevant.

Record source categories: Information will be collected from the following sources:

- Educational institutions attended;
- internship and/or residency training progress reports;
- IHS site selection questionnaires;
- IHS site selection questionnaires;
- IHS Scholarship or Loan Repayment applicants;
- financial institutions from which these applicants have obtained educational loans;

- Bureau of Health Professions Area Resources File tapes;
- health professional associations;
- HHS contractors/subcontractors;
- consumer reporting agencies/credit bureaus;
- lending institutions;
- PHS Commissioned Personnel Operations Division and U.S. Office of Personnel Operations Division and U.S. Office of Personnel Management personnel records;
- other Federal agencies, including but not limited to the Department of Treasury, the Internal Revenue Service, and the U.S. Postal Service; State or local government medical licensing boards and/or the Federation of State Medical Boards or a similar non-governmental entity; and third parties who provide references concerning the subject individual.

Systems exempted from certain provisions of the act: None